

WASHINGTON, D.C - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) praised passage today of H.R. 965 to permanently authorize funding for the [Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails Network](#)

grant program. The Network ties together more than 150 museums, state parks, wildlife refuges, Indian reservations, water trails, and other sites in six states and the District of Columbia, to enable visitors to appreciate the far-reaching role the Bay has had in the culture and history of the region.

"Those of us fortunate to live in this region have been blessed with a multitude of magnificent natural resources, not the least of which is our nation's largest estuary - the Chesapeake Bay, a body of water that has played such an important role in shaping our cultural, economic, political, and social history," **stated Congressman Hoyer.**

"Unfortunately, the Chesapeake Bay of 2009 is not the pristine body that Captain John Smith first charted on his expeditions some 400 years ago," **continued Hoyer.** "H.R. 965, the legislation we consider today, takes another important step forward in our efforts by permanently authorizing a program that has already done so much to raise awareness of the fragile health of the Bay and directly engage our region's citizens and visitors to take an active role in fulfilling our shared goal of restoring the Chesapeake."

The Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails Network program allocates matching grants of \$5,000 to \$50,000 for projects that advance Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network goals. Past Network grants have funded new maps, improved signs, and expanded trails that have helped enhance the public's ability to learn about and enjoy the Bay's natural and cultural resources, and empower citizens to be good stewards of the this great national treasure.

More than twenty-five of the 156 gateway sites are within Rep. Hoyer's 5th Congressional District, including Piscataway Park, Smallwood State Park, St. Clements Island-Potomac River Museum, Historic St. Mary's City, Point Lookout State Park, Calvert Cliffs State Park, Sotterly Plantation and Chesapeake Biological Laboratory.

"The Gateways program is a critical component to fostering a commitment among our citizens to restore the Bay, and I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation," **said Hoyer.**

For more information on the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Water Trails Network, visit www.baygateways.net/index.cfm

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